

Conference Report

The USCACA hosted symposiums at the 7th CACA annual meeting and the 15th CSCO annual meeting in Beijing

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Abstract

In September 2012, the US Chinese Anti-Cancer Association (USCACA) hosted two symposiums in Beijing. The USCACA hosted the first joint session at the 7th annual meetings of the Chinese Anti-Cancer Association (CACA), themed on “Collaboration between the US and China in Cancer Research.” Six experts from the United States and China presented their latest work on basic and translational cancer research. During this symposium, 5 young Chinese scholars, returnees after their training in the United States, were honored the “AFCR-USCACA Scholarships Award.” The USCACA hosted a second symposium during the 15th annual meeting of the Chinese Society of Clinical Oncology (CSCO), focused on the “US-China Collaboration in Cancer Drug Clinical Development.” An international delegation of oncology experts presented the innovative clinical trial strategies and discussed the biomarkers for cancer early detection and clinical trials, targeted therapy, and new drug development. The Oncology Drug Clinical Development and Safety Evaluation Committee was also launched to promote an innovative environment and to provide a collaborative platform for anti-cancer drug development in China.

In September 2012, the US Chinese Anti-Cancer Association (USCACA) hosted joint sessions at annual meetings of the Chinese Anti-Cancer Association (CACA) and the Chinese Society of Clinical Oncology (CSCO) in Beijing.

The 7th CACA Annual Meeting

On September 8th, the USCACA hosted a special symposium on “Collaboration between the US and China in Cancer Research” at the 7th CACA annual meeting. Dr. Wei Zhou (Merck Research Laboratories, USA) chaired the first session focusing on basic cancer research and Dr. Wancai Yang (Xinxiang Medical University, China) chaired the second session focusing on translational cancer research. Six experts from the United States and China, Drs. Yun-Guang Tong, Shi-Yuan Cheng, Zhi-Min Lu, Wancai Yang, Biao He, and Jian-Min Fang, presented their latest cancer research work and shared experiences in a series of topics,

including scientific training and career development in the United States, the difference of research environment between the two countries, and areas to consider in international collaboration projects. The experts also answered audience questions regarding cancer stem cells, personalized cancer prevention and therapy, new anti-cancer drugs, and potential national and international collaborations.

Between the two sessions, the USCACA held a ceremony to present the 2012 Scholar Excellence Award to recognize outstanding achievements in cancer research. Five awardees were honored for their research while in the United States, as well as for their continuous contributions to eradicate cancer after their return to China. This year, the Asian Fund for Cancer Research, Ltd. (AFCR) joined the USCACA in selecting and recognizing these highly talented young scientists for their excellence in basic or clinical cancer research. The 5 winners of the 2012 AFRC-USCACA Scholar Excellence Award are Dr. Xiu-Li Bi (Liaoning University, Shenyang, China), Drs. Bing-Hui Li and Li-Na Zhang (Tianjin Medical University Cancer Institute and Hospital, Tianjin, China), Dr. Yi Zhang (Soochow University, Suzhou, China), and Dr. Yu-Hua Zhao (Sichuan University, Chengdu, China). The USCACA President Dr. Wei Zhang (MD Anderson Cancer Center, USA) and the AFRC President Dr. Su-Juan Ba (the Asian Fund for Cancer Research, China) attended the symposium and presented the AFRC-USCACA Scholarships Award to the 5 Chinese scholars. A special feature

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article introducing the award and the awardees' accomplishments is published in the October issue of the Chinese Journal of Cancer (<http://www.cjcsysu.cn/ENpdf/2012/10/457.pdf>).

The 15th CSCO Annual Meeting

On September 20th and 21st, the USCACA and the CSCO hosted a joint symposium on "US-China Collaboration in Cancer Drug Clinical Development." An international USCACA delegation attended the symposium consisting executive members Drs. Li Yan, Li Xu, Michael Shi from the United States and Drs. Pascal Qian and Xiao-Xing Chen from China along with a group of renowned clinical trial experts from the United States and China.

Dr. Li Yan, Managing Director of the USCACA and Head of Oncology Emerging Markets Clinical Development at Merck, co-chaired the first joint session with Prof. Jun Ma, former CSCO president. Prof. Yi-Long Wu, President-elect of CSCO, and Dr. Eric Rubin, Vice President and Therapeutic Area Head of Merck Oncology, gave keynote speeches focusing on innovative clinical trial strategies. Speakers shared both academic and industrial perspectives on biomarker-driven clinical trial designs in the era of molecular targeted anti-cancer agents.

Prof. Tony Mok from Chinese University Hong Kong and Dr. Li Yan co-chaired the second session "Requirements on Infrastructure and High Quality Execution of Innovative Clinical Trials." A group of highly influential international experts, including Dr. Jack Welsh, US National Cancer Institute; Prof. Dan Sullivan, Executive Vice President of Moffitt Cancer Center; Prof. George Wilding, President of University of Wisconsin Comprehensive Cancer Center; and Mr. Christopher Ung, President and Chief Operation Officer of Cistogene. The speakers presented state-of-the-art development in the areas of corporative trials in government-sponsored trial network or academic consortiums, bio-specimen collection and resource management to maximize the clinical use of biomarkers, innovative imaging in anti-cancer drug development, and practical approaches to developing companion diagnostics for molecular targeted drugs.

On September 21st, USCACA executives Drs. Li Xu (Pfizer Oncology) and Michael Shi (Novartis Oncology) co-chaired the session on "Innovative Investigator-Initiated Trials (IIT)." Mr. Rich Nelson, Vice President of PharmaNet, discussed the logistical requirements of investigator-initiated research. Prof. Cai-Cun Zhou of Tongji University Shanghai Pulmonary Hospital shared his insights in successful design and execution of OPTIMAL, a China investigator-initiated study on EGFR inhibitor in a biomarker-defined subpopulation of lung cancer patients. Prof. James Yao of MD Anderson Cancer Center reviewed successful examples of IIT

leading to global registration trials and resulting in subsequent indication expansion of Affinitor, an mTOR inhibitor, in neuroendocrine tumors.

Dr. Xiao-Xiang Chen, Vice President of Boehringer Ingelheim, and Dr. Xiao-Jin Yin, President of R&D of Sincere, co-chaired the fourth session on pipeline review. Prof. Chao Chen, Vice President of Northwestern University Genome Center discussed efforts in China in developing personalized genetic tests for both clinical development and clinical use of anti-cancer medicines. Prof. Hong-Sheng Lin of Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences discussed the proposed guidelines of evidence-based clinical development of traditional Chinese medicine in oncology.

Dr. Jorge Puente, President of Asia Pacific and Japan Pfizer Oncology Business Unit; Dr. Eric Rubin of Merck; Dr. Michael Shi, Global Clinical Leader of Novartis oncology; Dr. Jing-Zi Wu, President of Ascleitis; and Dr. Lian-Shan Zhang, President of Global R&D HengRui Pharma, gave an overview of each company's pipeline focusing on China prevalent tumor types. Dr. Jian Peng, Oncology Head of Sanofi Aventis China, previous Head of Oncology Review Section, China SFDA Center for Drug Evaluation, shared his perspectives on Chinese regulations of novel cancer drug development in China.

Launch of Oncology Drug Clinical Development and Safety Evaluation Committee

After 2 years of preparation, the CSCO launched the newly formed Committee of Clinical Development and Safety Evaluation. The mission of the committee is to promote an innovative environment and to provide a collaborative platform between academy, agency, and industry for anti-cancer drug development in China. The committee members consist of experts in academia, industry, and regulatory agencies from China and the United States.

Prof. Shu-Kui Qin, President of the CSCO, hosted the ceremony of official launch of the Committee. He praised the USCACA's contributions in providing key support to bridge the knowledge gaps between the United States and China in oncology clinical development. He also conferred on behalf of the CSCO the certificate on Prof. Jun Ma and Dr. Li Yan as co-chairs of this committee, representing the CSCO and the USCACA respectively.

In summary, the USCACA focuses on the US-China collaboration in cancer research, cancer drug development, and cancer treatment and prevention. For more information about the USCACA, please visit www.uscaca.org.

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